

THE MALPRACTICE INDEMNITY FUND.

Over three hundred members having sent in their subscriptions, the Malpractice Indemnity Fund became operative on December 7, 1916. Contributing members, and contributing members only, are entitled to its benefit and protection on claims made against them arising out of and originating from professional services rendered by them on and after December 7, 1916.

No doubt, now that the plan is in operation, and that the State Society not only defends its members, but stands ready to assume the burden of settling all claims, subscribers to the Fund will rapidly increase in number. For their benefit, we must state that no contributing members shall be entitled to its protection as to claims arising from services rendered prior to the receipt by the Society of their subscription to the Fund.

Remember! Malpractice Defense is separate from the Indemnity Fund. Membership in the latter is purely voluntary. But members so protected need no other insurance. The last argument for carrying protection other than that afforded by the State Society has been nullified.

MEDICAL EDUCATION BY NEWSPAPERS.

The unfortunate death of a child in San Francisco, almost immediately following a prophylactic dose of diphtheria antitoxin, has caused much discussion in the lay press and among the people at large. The autopsy revealed a marked status lymphaticus, so that it is evident that the death is in nowise chargeable to the antitoxin, but to the shock of its administration, which the child was unable to resist.

We extend to the press our unstinted praise for its sincere exposition of the facts and for the incalculable value it has been in helping properly to educate the public to interpret the findings; and to make clear that this deplorable incident should not jeopardize the lives of other children by restriction in the use of the antitoxin as a prophylactic in the case of those exposed to diphtheria.

This is the kind of medical education the public needs and should have. Let it be encouraged!

THE MEDICAL PRACTICE ACT.

The present law regulating the practise of medicine divides all practitioners into two classes: "physicians and surgeons" and "drugless practitioners," and avoids any reference to sects or cults. It outlines very definitely the scope of practise for the two classes. Physicians and surgeons are authorized "to use drugs or what are known as medicinal preparations in or upon human beings and to use any and all other methods in the treatment of diseases, injuries, deformities, or other physical or mental conditions." Drugless practitioners are authorized to practise "without the use of drugs or what are known as medicinal preparations and without in any manner severing or penetrating any of the tissues of human beings except the severing of the umbilical cord." Reasonable educational requirements are demanded of applicants for either class of license and they must

also present diplomas from schools *approved by the Board*, and certificates of good moral character. This "approved by the Board" clause in the law is a most important feature, for it subjects all medical teaching institutions to frequent inspections by the Board, thus compelling them to do good work. Already several institutions unable to meet the Board's demands for radical improvements have "gone out of business." The value of this feature of the law cannot be over-estimated. The present Medical Practise Act has many other good features and, although it has some defects, it would be extremely undesirable to see it weakened in any way. Get in touch at once with your senators and assemblymen and make them realize that the regular medical profession demands that standards be *not lowered*.

Elsewhere in the JOURNAL appears a complete list of the members of the California legislature arranged by districts for your information. If any of these men are your patients write to them at once!

A CRYING NEED—A STATE PSYCHOPATHIC HOSPITAL.

At last it looks as if the people of the state of California have been aroused to the point of doing something big and sensible in the matter of removing the disgrace attending the methods of examination and commitment of the insane and the prevention of mental diseases in general. The state has excellent hospitals for the insane, which unfortunately are filled to overflowing, and nothing is being done upon the broad scientific scale that the situation demands, to prevent insanity nor to inquire why California has so much more of it than other states. Our medical schools are without facilities for teaching mental diseases,—most medical students in California graduate without ever having seen an insane patient. Johns Hopkins, Harvard Medical School and the University of Michigan have research psychopathic hospitals which act as clearing houses for the insane for their respective states, and in Michigan under the direction of the professor in charge of the psychopathic hospital of the University there have sprung up throughout the state numerous psychopathic clinics which provide treatment and care for many cases which should never enter an insane asylum. The number of insane in asylums has been reduced 25%; the insanity commissioners throughout the state receive the skilled assistance of the staff of the psychopathic hospital in coping with their problems; the police departments receive assistance in dealing with drug habitues and the criminal insane; the medical profession of Michigan have near at hand a place where they may receive excellent post-graduate courses in mental diseases and something is being done to prevent mental wrecks in the next generation as well as giving better care to those already lost.

Now comes the California State Board of Health with a bill in the present state legislature asking for half a million dollars for the establishment of a psychopathic hospital as a part of the